bathymetry along the Western and Eastern Coasts of India are being explored under the APEX programme. So far, over 25,700 line kilometres (LK) of seismic data has been acquired. Based on the data acquired and processed, a number of prospects have been identified including the areas spread over deep water areas of Bombay Offshore. Kerala-Konkan, Cauvery and Krishna-Godavari basins which have been prioritised for exploratory test drilling during the current Plan period.

A provision of Rs. 150 crores has been earmarked in the Annual Plan of ONGC for the Year 1996-97 for deep water drilling.

(c) As per the recommended outlay by the Planning Commission, an amount of Rs. 4550 crores was envisaged for exploration. This was subsequently enhanced to Rs. 8503 crores after formulation of APEX. Out of this, Rs. 8248 crores are expected to be spent during VIII Plan period.

Outlays for IX Plan has not yet been firmed up.

Allocation of ISD/STD/PCOs in Visakhapatnam

2497. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of applications from Visakhapatnam district in Andhra Pradesh for ISD/STD/PCOs;

(b) the number of ISD/STD/PCOs allotted in 1994-95 in Visakhapatnam; and

(c) the steps proposed to clear this backing in Visakhapatnam?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATION (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) 123 applications are at present pending for allotment of STD/ISD/PCOs were allotted, during 1994-95, in Visakhapatnam.

(c) The pending 123 applications which have been received after 19.9.95, the date on which the STD/ISD/PCO Allotment Committee last met and allotted 404 STD/ISD/PCOs, would be cleared after expansion of the exchanges

Plight of Animals in Darjeeling Himalayan Padmaja Naidu Zoo

2498. SHRI RATNA BAHADUR RAI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that most of the rare species of birls and animals in Darjeeling Himalayan Padmaja Naidu Zoo are the victims of negligence, malnutrition and callousness?

(b) whether it is a fact that animals like tigers are kept underfed/ undernourished denying them of their quota of meat etc;

(c) if so, whether the Government have instituted any enquiry in this regard, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Does not arise.

Developmental work by North-Eastern Council

2499. SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the amount released to North-Eastern Council (NEC) for developmental projects during the last five years, Year-Wise;

(b) the details of the developmental projects undertaken/to be under taken by the NEC, State-Wise in last five years, year-wise along with total amount spent/ to be spent on these projects, project-wise;

(c) whether NEC proposes to finance Moranhat-Dibrugarh rail alignment, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the details of present sanctioned strength of staff and actual positioned strength of NEC, designation-wise and location-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (PROF. M. KAMSON): (a) Planning Commission has approved an outlay of Rs. 202 crores in 1990-91, Rs. 230 crores in 1991-92 but actual allocation was only Rs. 219.50 crores due to 5% economy cut, Rs. 230 crores in 1992-93 Rs. 265 crores in 1993-94 and Rs. 307 crores in 1994-95 to North Eastern Council.

(b) to (d) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Express Highways in Maharashtra

2500. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to provide Express Highways in the State of Maharashtra in view of the strategic location in the industrial map of the country; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI M. RAJASEKARA MURTHY): (a) and (b) It is proposed to conduct feasibility studies for construction of Express Highways (Super National Highways) in the country including those in the State of Maharashtra on Build, Operate and Transfer basis. The actual construction will depend on the viability as established by the feasibility studies.

Cleaning Industrial waste from Ganga River

2501. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: SHRI JANARDAN YADAV: SHRI NAGMANI:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of the large scale disposal of industrial wastes in Ganga river, Government have any plan to clean the water of river Ganga and dispose of the wastes in the Bay of Cambay by pipeline;

(b) if so, by when the said plan will be implemented and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government have taken any steps to stop the inflow of industrial and chemical polluted water into the said river?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) and (b): No, Sir. The Government have no plans to dispose the industrial wastes in the Bay of Cambay by pipeline as the industrial units are required to treat their wastes inhouse to the prescribed standards before discharge into river.

(c) The West Bengal Pollution Control Board regularly monitors the quality of discharged effluents by the major industrial units along the river Ganga. As a result most of these units have set up effluent treatment plants and meet the prescribed standards. Certain abberations sometimes occur for which corrective action is taken.

Import of Crude Oil from Kuwait

2502. SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to import Crude Oil from Kuwait; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and agreement proposed to be made in this regard stating the total expenditure of foreign exchange if required?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPTAIN SATISH SHARMA): (a) and (b) Indian Oil Corporation has entered into a term contract with M/s. Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC), Kuwait for import of 4.5 MMT of crude oil during 1995-96 at official selling prices declared on month to month basis. The prices payable are market related. The estimated value of the above import is likely to be US $516.65 million.